

Message Text

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14

ACTION EUR-12

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USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1985

USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

USDOCOSOUTH FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, PINT, CY

SUBJ: CLERIDES DEFENDS HIMSELF

REF: NICOSIA 0906 (DTG 081150Z APR 76)

SUMMARY. IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AFTERNOON SESSION JULY 14
UNITED PARTY LEADER AND HOUSE PRESIDENT FLAFOS CLERIDES VIGOROUSLY
DEFENDED HIS CONDUCT AS ACTING PRESIDENT OF GOC IN 1974 AND AS
GREEK CYPRIOT NEGOTIATOR. IN LONG-AWAITED VIGOROUS SPEECH TO
DEPUTIES AND GALLERY FILLED WITH ENTHUSIASTIC CLERIDES SUPPORTERS,
HE COUNTERATTACKED HIS OPPOSITION WHICH IS ATTEMPTING TO DENY HIM
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RE-ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF HOUSE WHOSE TERM HAS BEEN

EXTENDED THROUGH SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY

1. MAIN ATTACK ON CLERIDES 1974 PRESIDENCY WAS CHARGES FROM EDEK LEADER LYSSARIDES THAT ILLEGAL GROUPS HAD NOT BEEN PROMPTLY DISARMED. IN RESPONSE CLERIDES REMINDED THE HOUSE THAT IN THE CYPRIOT RUINS IN 1974 THERE WAS NO ARMY OR POLICE FORCE WITH WHICH TO UNDERTAKE SUCH AN ACTION. NEVERTHELESS I DISARMED THEM BLOODLESSLY, DESPITE THE OBSTACLES PUT IN MY WAY." HOUSE GALLERY, WHICH WAS FILLED WITH CLERIDES-SUPPORTERS, INTERRUPTED HIS SPEECH AT THIS POINT WITH VIGOROUS APPLAUSE. CONTINUING, CLERIDES SUBMITTED THAT WITH BLOODLESS DISARMAMENT ACCOMPLISHED HE HAD SET IN PLACE CORNERSTONE OF THE CYPRUS WHICH HE HANDED OVER TO MAKARIOS: "I RECEIVED CHAOS AND I DELIVERED A STATE."

2. DEFENDING HIS HANDLING OF VIENNA FIVE NEGOTIATIONS AND SO-CALLED SECRET AGREEMENT (REFTEL), CLERIDES ALLEGED INITIAL GOC KNOWLEDGE OF AND CONSENT TO BRUSSELS AGREEMENT WHICH CYPRIOT NATIONAL COUNCIL SUBSEQUENTLY, SECRETLY REPUDIATED. HE CLAIMED THAT HE WAS CORRECT TO RECONFIRM AGREEMENT, DESPITE GOC REPUDIATION, AT VIENNA BECAUSE TURKISH SIDE WOULD HAVE USED REPUDIATION AS PRETEXT TO ABANDON TALKS. HE AFFIRMED THAT AGREEMENT WITH RUKS TO SUBMIT GREEK CYPRIOT PROPOSALS TEN DAYS BEFORE TURKISH CYPRIOT PROPOSALS WAS INTENDED TO BE SECRET ONLY IN SENSE THAT IT WAS NOT FOR PUBLICATION AND IF LEAKED IT WOULD BE DENIED WITHOUT, HOWEVER, MEANING ANY RETREAT FROM WHAT HAD BEEN AGREED.

3. CLERIDES WAS FOLLOWED AT PODIUM BY UNIFIED PARTY DEPUTIES WHO DEFENDED THEIR LEADER AND CLAIMED CURRENT CAMPAIGN AGAINST HIM WAS "COOKED UP IN POLITICAL KITCHENS OF AKEL" (COMMUNIST PARTY) AS ELECTION TACTIC AGAINST CYPRIOT RIGHT.

4. SPEECH WAS MAJOR NEWS STORY HERE JULY 15. EDITORIAL REACTION IN GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS JULY 16 FOLLOWED PREDICTABLE PARTY LINES. PRO-LYSSARIDES TA NEA FOUND HIS DEFENSE OF SECRET AGREEMENT UNCONVINCING, ALLEGED UNIFIED PARTY HAD PLAYED SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN CREATING CHAOS OF 1974, CLAIMED CLERIDES HAD NOT LEFT PRESIDENCY VOLUNTARILY BUT ONLY UNDER POPULAR PRESSURE. COMMUNIST HARAVGHI HEARD NOTHING NEW IN CLERIDES' SPEECH, ASKED CONFIDENTIAL

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WHERE WERE THE SENSATIONAL DOCUMENTS WHICH HE WAS UNDERSTOOD TO BE GOING TO RELEASE TO SUPPORT HIS CONTENTIONS. RIGHTIST MAKHI SAW NO COINCIDENCE THAT ANTI-CLERIDES CAMPAIGN STARTED ON DAY AKEL LEADER PAPAIOANNOU RETURNED FROM EASTERN EUROPE, CLAIMED WHOLE CAMPAIGN NOTHING BUT COMMUNIST REACTION TO CLERIDES' PRO-WESTERN STAND, AND ACCUSED AKEL FOR PUTTING SOVIET INTERESTS AHEAD OF CYPRIOT. OBVIOUSLY ON MAKARIOS' ORDERS GOC-CONTROLLED CBC RADIO AND TV GAVE SPEECH MINIMAL COVERAGE, LEFT

OUT OF THEIR REPORTING CLERIDES' MOST
TELLING POINTS.

5. COMMENT: ON BALANCE CLERIDES GAVE CONVINCING ACCOUNT OF
HIS PROBITY AS PRESIDENT AND NEGOTIATER, AN ACCOUNT WHICH SHOULD
BE USEFUL TO HIM IN CURRENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN. AT AFTERNOON
SESSION OF HOUSE JULY 16 LYSSARIDES WILL ANSWER CLERIDES,
PROBABLY ALONG LINES OF TA NEA EDITORIAL NOTED ABOVE. SAME SESSION
WILL ALSO ELECT PRESIDENT OF HOUSE TO PRESIDE THROUGH
SEPTEMBER ELECTIONS AND, IN ACCORD WITH CYPRIOT CONSTI-
TUTION, TO BE ACTING PRESIDENT OF COUNTRY IN ABSENCE OF
MAKARIOS, WHO IS EXPECTED TO ATTEND COLOMBO CONFERENCE IN
AUGUST. AS TO PROBABLE RESULTS OF HOUSE VOTE, OUR
IMPRESSION IS THAT WHILE CLERIDES HAS REGAINED SOME
LOST GROUND IN THE LAST SEVERAL DAYS AS A RESULT OF HIS
STRONG DEFENSE, ODDS ARE STILL AGAINST HIS KEEPING THE
HOUSE PRESIDENCY WHICH HE HAS HELD FOR NEARLY SIXTEEN
YEARS.
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